



## **Notes from Ad-hoc Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Hwy 99W Corridor Improvement & Management Plan**

<b>Date of Meeting: January 31, 2007</b>
<b>Name of Committee: CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Notes taken by: Ron Bunch, Long Range Planning Manager</b>
<b>Called to order by: Ron Bunch, Long Range Planning Manager</b>
<b>Location: City of Tigard, Town Hall Conference Room</b>
<b>Time Started: 6:30 PM</b>
<b>Time Ended: 9:00 PM</b>

**Members Present: Daniel Barnes, Jesse Black, Steve Boughton, Sue Carver, Tom Fergusson, Tim McGilvrey, William Moss, Roger Potthoff, Cherree Weeks**

**Members Absent: Rex Caffall, Paul Owen**

**Others Present: Tigard City Councilor, Gretchen Buehner; DKS Associates, Randy McCourt, Alan Snook; Eco Northwest Radcliffe Dacanay, Roger Wyman; OTAK, Tom Litster; ODOT, Ross Kevlin**

**Staff Present: Ron Bunch, Long Range Planning Manager; Gus Duenas, City Engineer**

### **Convene Meeting**

Ron Bunch introduced the purpose of the meeting, which was to get the CAC's input on the consultant's report pertaining to Highway 99W opportunities, constraints and alternatives produced by the consulting team. Following that, those present introduced themselves.

## **Presentation and Discussion**

### Format of the Meeting and Process of Developing the Consultant's Report

Randy McCourt of DKS Associates discussed the format of the meeting, saying the presentation would have breaks in order to receive questions from the CAC members. He said it was important to hear from the CAC regarding whether the consulting team had addressed and brought forth all relevant issues. He said it is important to hear from the CAC whether the analysis addressed all the needs about Highway 99W that the community feels are important. It was noted the consulting team had done a technical analysis, but other issues and problems may exist that are most apparent to those who live and work in the community.

Alan Snook provided an overview of the process of developing the report. He said this portion of the project involved an analysis of the constraints and opportunities that affect the various transportation modes on Hwy 99W and that the project has identified both transportation and land use issues. He said there are no magic treatments, no silver bullet for solutions, rather, what has been discovered is that there is a complex interplay of constraints and problems; and there is just as complex interplay of treatments to improve the functioning of each of the individual modes of travel – including pedestrian, bike, transit and vehicular along the facility. He said understanding the relationships of the travel modes among one another is very important.

Mr. Snook used bicycle travel as an example. He said along the highway, about 10% of its total length has gaps that do not allow bikes to travel without getting into the vehicle travel lanes. He said that this results in obvious conflicts with other modes.

### Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel Constraints

Mr. Snook then went over the overall analysis of the bicycle travel constraints. He referred to a PowerPoint presentation and showed various photos of constraints affecting bicycle travel.

Mr. Snook then presented an inventory and analysis of constraints affecting pedestrian travel with the PowerPoint presentation. He noted there are approximately two miles of sidewalk gaps along the highway that prevent easy and safe pedestrian movement. He said that pedestrian and transit uses are closely linked. For example, unless pedestrians can easily access transit, they are less likely to use it. He noted that if there is inadequate ridership along the highway, it will take longer for transit to be a viable option to the automobile.

Mr. Snook also pointed out the disconnected network of pedestrian access to the highway from local properties along the highway. He noted that pedestrian use is constrained by long street crossing lengths and that multiple access driveways along the highway also conflict with pedestrian and bike travel. In particular, he noted the conflict multiple driveways pose to

transit and pedestrian use. He said pedestrians crossing driveways are in danger of being struck by cars when they are trying to access transit stops. He said this is a very uncomfortable situation for pedestrians. Mr. Snook also showed the close spatial relationship between the pedestrian and vehicle travel. He noted that pedestrians probably feel very uncomfortable walking so close to high volumes of automobile traffic. In particular, he said, driveway access issues conflict with a needed sense of pedestrian comfort and safety. Mr. Snook again summarized the transit user, pedestrian and driveway conflict. He showed examples of driveways and transit stops.

### Constraints to Motor Vehicle Travel and Land Use Issues

Mr. Snook then used the PowerPoint presentation to review motor vehicle needs along Hwy 99W. He indicated his team's study projects traffic volumes to the year 2030 and that, throughout this period, (using current regional traffic modeling assumptions) traffic volumes will increase. Currently the volume to capacity ratio of the highway is .95 or greater at key intersections. He noted that greater than one (1.0) is where the intersections fail to accommodate thru traffic. Mr. Snook then reviewed intersections that are recurring bottlenecks along the highway.

He indicated that vehicular users of the corridor consist of 53% who travel straight through (they neither originate, nor have, a destination along the corridor); about 3% who originate along the corridor and drive from one location to another. The remainder, about 43 – 44%, is those who travel from adjoining local land use areas to destinations along the corridor or adjoining land uses.

Mr. Snook reviewed facts about driveways along the corridor, he indicated there were more than 100 driveways along the corridor, and none of them meet the ODOT access spacing guidelines. He showed where there were several driveways between signals that cause significant access inefficiencies. In particular, he showed locations close to the I-5 on-ramp where there were multiple driveways that caused delays due to turning movements. There was discussion that driveways are a significant problem.

Councilor Buehner pointed out that the Murray cut-thru should be evaluated seriously as a way to decrease "through-trip travel" by providing alternative travel opportunities. The consultants pointed out that their studies indicate a lot of traffic growth on the north part of the corridor in the vicinity of Metzger. He indicated that growth of traffic will continue on south of the corridor and cause further congestion delays.

### Comments from CAC Members

Jesse Black asked the question, "Who are we solving problems on the highway for?" He said that we need to ask the question, "Are we solving problems for people who use the highway

for through-travel, or for the citizens of Tigard?” Mr. Kevlin of ODOT responded that there needs to be a balance of use on the highway. He said it is an ODOT facility and, as such, needs to address a variety of travel needs, including the needs of local community. He said it is not a free-flowing traffic facility. It needs to provide a variety of travel options, including access to local land uses. He said the livability of Tigard is very important, but it needs to be balanced with the state’s mobility objectives.

Mr. Morris said both ODOT and the City should look at some immediate fixes. He said that Tigard and the state should take actions that will address problems quickly and, if necessary, come back and do the ultimate solutions when money is available. He said areas should be identified that can be fixed fairly quickly to improve the function of the roadway. Mr. Duenas, City Engineer, said this is one of the things the project will do. Projects will be identified that can be done relatively inexpensively and quickly. However, he said it is important to set priorities. He noted that priority-setting is one thing that this project intends to do.

Councilor Buehner indicated that the street maintenance fee, as it is now formulated, cannot be used for sidewalks. She said those who are interested in using portions of the street maintenance fee for sidewalks should be interested in its future renewal.

Mr. Morris discussed the Walnut extension – 121st to Fowler Middle School. He asked about the status of that project. Mr. Duenas said this project is not part of the Hwy 99W Corridor Study; however, staff will determine its status and get back to Mr. Morris.

Roger Potthoff said there needs to be a balance of solutions, and that balance needs to include land use. He said the solutions need to consider bike /pedestrian /automobile at the outset. Mr. Potthoff asked if the project will identify concrete (hard) fixes and the softer fixes such as land use and transportation management. Mr. Duenas indicated that, yes, the whole range of solutions will be evaluated. Mr. Potthoff asked, in view of incomplete bike and pedestrian access, will solutions provide a balance of solutions between short and long term fixes and between “hard and soft fixes”? For example, the aesthetics of the corridor are not very conducive to pedestrian, bike or transit use. The experience of the “trip along the corridor” is not a good one.

#### Responses to Issues Raised by the CAC

Mr. Snook responded that aesthetics are a very important part of creating an attractive and usable multi-modal facility. Safety measures are also important. For example, he said that more room for pedestrians is needed to separate them from the automobile. Several things can be done to improve the safety and aesthetics of the highway to make it safer and easier to use, especially for pedestrians and bicyclists and transit users. He pointed out various examples in his PowerPoint presentation of where this has happened in other communities. He noted that

safety enhancements are also important for automobile users. For example, the multitude of turning movements caused by uncontrolled driveways is an example of vehicular safety issues.

There was discussion about potential enhancements for pedestrians, including the pros and cons of doing this - such as center medians for pedestrians & refugees. It was pointed out that in some areas such improvements would require additional right-of-way. Without additional right-of-way, the capacity of the roadway could be reduced. However it was noted that, in some cases, medians also allow for better through traffic movement.

Other pedestrian safety measures are also possible, such as improved pedestrian crossings consisting of better crosswalk striping and countdown timers. There was discussion of the deficient intersections, both for vehicles and pedestrians. It was noted that intersection improvements would enhance both motor vehicle travel and pedestrian access.

Frontage and backage roads were also discussed. Councilor Buehner said frontage roads had once existed along the highway and parts of these still exist. In addition, she said that rebuilding frontage and backage roads would help solve some of the access and travel problems along the highway. The consultants noted one of the problems of the highway was that it was a diagonal roadway that was one imposed on a grid.

The consulting team noted that frontage/backage roads along other corridors work well, but also noted there are potential trade-offs that need to be evaluated such as impacts on adjoining land uses. There was discussion of linking parking lots to allow travel between land uses without the need to travel on the roadway. It was stressed that this could work for pedestrian and bike travel as well. This is something that future land use regulations could address.

There was further discussion about the multiple driveway access points and the need to address conflicts with turning vehicles. The consulting team pointed out there would be significant improvement to vehicular travel if the driveway issues were addressed. This would be a low cost solution that could have significant benefits if driveways could be configured so parcels would have only one “in” and one “out” driveway. The consulting team showed pictures of broad expanses of asphalt abutting the highway that were used as uncontrolled exit and access points. There was additional discussion that such improvements would also improve pedestrian access, as previously discussed.

This discussion emphasized the need to promote shared access and proper intervals of driveways through site design regulations. It was noted that most of the problem driveways had been grandfathered in over the years. Addressing this will take coordination between the City and ODOT. Also a lot of one-on-one negotiation would be necessary.

CAC member, William Morris, asked about using temporary barriers such as “Jersey barriers” to enhance pedestrian safety. He noted the barriers could serve as an interim solution and

could be removed when money for a more expensive long-term fix was found. He also asked about using spring-loaded round rubber tubes to channel traffic. Gus Duenas said these are used primarily for temporary fixes and, more-often-than not, they are run over multiple times and broken.

Jesse Black noted some businesses along Hwy 99W have very limited driveway access, and that this needs to be taken into account if a driveway improvement program is to be pursued. He said it is important not to put anyone out of business. The consulting team and Mr. Duenas concurred. It was discussed that a driveway safety/capacity improvement effort can't be a one-size-fits all solution. Individual properties need to be evaluated.

An example of driveways being too close to an intersection was the Gaarde / McDonald intersection. There was discussion about providing for legal u-turns if medians were used to prevent turning conflicts.

### **Enhancing Transit Service and Regional Transportation Plans for Highway 99W**

The consultants indicated that Tri-Met has worked on improving transit service along Highway 99W implementing improvements such as fixed guide ways and streamlining bus routes. The consultants referred to a PowerPoint presentation during the discussion. It was noted again that one of the most important short-term improvements would be to reduce the conflict between transit-bound pedestrians and automobiles by fixing the gaps in the pedestrian system and addressing the driveway issues. There was additional discussion about aesthetics. CAC members stressed again that the aesthetics and comfort level of the transit stops were generally very poor. CAC members said that transit service would likely improve significantly if covered bus waiting areas and benches were provided. Councilor Buehner noted that the City Council has been negotiating with TriMet to improve Tigard's transit service for some time.

The consulting teams noted that is as a. The CAC again emphasized that transit stop amenities, general amenities, and safety are important to improving transit service. It is necessary for people to want to take transit. Currently, it is a pretty bleak environment along the highway.

The consulting team noted that the Regional Transportation Plan had designated Hwy 99W to be widened to seven lanes from Hwy 217/I-5 to Greenburg Road. The CAC members discussed the possibility of extending the widening to Gaarde Street. It was noted that traffic going south would increase significantly because of this. One CAC member said that such action would create an attractive nuisance. Essentially, it would create more traffic on an already over-burdened facility.

The consulting team noted also that if the widening occurred, there would be a significant amount of intersection conflicts with side traffic trying to get onto Highway 99W.

The CAC asked the question if the City was involved in the I-5 to 99W connector (in the vicinity of Sherwood and Wilsonville). The CAC noted that improvements to other facilities could take a significant amount of “through” traffic off of Hwy 99W. Councilor Buehner said that the northern alignment of the I-5 to 99W connector would be the one that accomplished this objective; however, she said it appeared that the southern alignment was the one being preferred. Other CAC members noted the seven-lane widening from the I-5 / 217 overpass was not financially feasible because the 217 overpass was four lanes. It would require rebuilding that facility. CAC members asked the question about improving the Highway 99W viaduct (railroad over-crossing) and asked if that was feasible. The consulting team said it could be practically done but the cost would be really significant. There was discussion about whether this had been evaluated in the past.

The consulting team also pointed out the nature of the impact of a seven-lane road widening on adjacent properties. They noted the significant property “takes” that would be necessary to widen the I-5 / 217 to Gaarde section of Hwy 99W. They also noted the number of buildings that would be directly affected by this effort. There were questions about the practicality of an overpass at Gaarde. Gus Duenas, City Engineer, said this had been modeled and deemed not feasible due to its costs and questionable benefits.

Councilor Buehner said that the (currently proposed) Greenburg Road / 99W / Main Street and the Hall / 99W improvements would significantly address the bottleneck problems on 99W. City Engineer, Gus Duenas, said the County is developing plans for the Hall/99W intersection and the City if moving ahead with the Greenburg Road intersection by revenue from the recently adopted local fuel tax ordinance.

CAC member, Dan Barnes, indicated that the roadway also accommodates utilities and that any improvements to the roadway should also consider the need to either upgrade utilities or underline them. Mr. Duenas acknowledged that utilities are important and would be considered. Mr. Morris asked questions about putting pedestrian crossings under the roadway. The consulting team said that it has been proven that the pedestrian does not like to use these facilities because of safety concerns and they do not recommend this kind of improvement.

The CAC members then discussed the Transit “bricks and mortar” solutions versus “program/service improvement”, such as providing transit service to the areas in the southwest and southeast of the City.

The CAC members asked how the perceived “low level of current transit service” could be reconciled with designation of Highway 99W as a “high capacity transit corridor”. It was

noted that Hwy 99W is not conducive to transit use because of the issues already discussed. In addition, it was emphasized that the highway was still unattractive and does not seem to foster the kind of use that naturally would support transit.

The CAC members discussed the need for a linkage between Tri-Met bus service and commuter rail. It was noted that more direct/efficient connections between these two kinds of transit uses would increase the transit potential of the corridor.

Some CAC members noted that all of the Bull Mountain area is under-served by transit. It was noted that better locations for transit stops were possible along the length of highway.

#### Land Use Characteristics / Issues of the Highway 99W Corridor and Adjacent Lands

Eco Northwest consultants discussed the land use characteristics of Highway 99W. They said that Metro had designated Highway 99W as a having a “2040 Corridor designation. The consultants said that there had already been discussion about the characteristics of a Metro 2040 Corridor. However, more specifically, a 2040 Corridor has intense land use activities that support transit. 2040 Corridors are supposed to have an average density of about 25 persons per acre. The consultants noted, for reasons provided in the inventory report, it doesn’t appear that much of the corridor will redevelop in the short term to land uses that will be more transportation efficient; land uses that emulate the characteristics of a 2040 Corridor design type designation.

However, two areas were pointed out, where in the short term, relative to other areas; land use actions could affect the travel characteristics of the corridor such as decreasing reliance on the automobile. These are the Tigard Downtown and the Tigard Triangle areas.

Eco Northwest said that these areas could be redeveloped into walkable and compact, high-intensity, shopping, employment and dense residential areas. He said that in these areas it would be possible to foster these kinds of improvements in the next five to ten years. He said with these land use enhancements, increased transit usage would likely happen.

Tom Litster, OTAK, said the City needs to take action to implement the Downtown Plan. This requires legislative amendments to the City’s Community Development Code and Plan Map. Councilor Buenher said the City is doing this.

Mr. Dacanay, of Eco Northwest, showed examples of how major roads in other parts of the country were improved over time to become more pedestrian friendly and transit oriented boulevards.

Councilor Buehner stressed that the consultants need to coordinate the Hwy 99W plan with the Downtown Plan. The Councilor said that the Downtown Plan takes precedence. This was



also emphasized by the CAC. The objective is to ensure that any new improvements on Hwy 99W would support Tigard's vision of its Downtown.

Mr. Potthoff said this is important for the credibility of the Hwy 99W Study. He noted that the Downtown had, in both the short- and long-term, proposed significant improvements that would have to be taken into account by the Hwy 99W corridor study. It's important, he said, to have a real understanding of what is happening in the Downtown area.

The CAC emphasized to the consulting team that 99W needs to be reclaimed from being a commercial strip that resembled parts of 82<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. The consulting team said there were examples of well-designed high-capacity boulevards throughout the region and elsewhere, such as Evergreen Avenue in Hillsboro and Tanasbourne.

The consulting team said that it is possible to promote a better future Highway 99W and adjacent land uses. Randy McCourt stressed that the Hwy 99W project is as much an economic development effort as it is a land use and transportation planning effort. He said that a positive future needs to be envisioned and actions taken to deliver it to the community. He said that enhancements to the highway need to lead to alternatives to achieve the community's vision.

Mr. McCourt identified four distinct areas along Hwy 99W that may need different treatments. The first is I-5 to Highway 217; Highway 217 to Walnut; Walnut to McDonald and McDonald to Durham. Each of these areas has their separate characteristics. Mr. McCourt said the selection of enhancements and improvements need to be geared to the character envisioned for each one of these separate segments. There may be some overlap among the segments.

Mr. Snook then went over the low-, medium- and high-effort alternatives. He also described these as short – medium - and long-range projects. For example as driveway improvement effort could yield a lot of benefit without much cost. Intersection improvements are moderate cost and longer term projects. Land use planning and subsequent redevelopment would take a much longer time. He said that short-, mid- and long-range solutions need to be considered concurrently; all three are important.

Mr. McCourt then asked the CAC if it had any specific comments. Tom Ferguson, CPO4 said he feels that having seven lanes might be appropriate if similar improvements are made on the south part of Hwy 99W. However, land use actions and other improvements are needed to increase the density and transit feasibility along other sections. He said that it is important to increase the aesthetic qualities to make Highway 99W and the area around it more useable for pedestrians. It was noted that Hwy 99W itself may not become a pedestrian-oriented street because of its scale, but it's possible that 100 feet or so away from the roadway, where there is adequate buffering, areas may exist that could be redeveloped to a nice pedestrian environment.

Mr. Owens said that the north portion of Hwy 99W has a very urban and dense feel to it and probably is better for employment/commercial development and maybe high density housing. He said that this area has good locational characteristics for these types of land uses, but access and congestion issues must be addressed. He said the character of the residential / lower density character of the south portion of the highway needs to be respected.

Mike McGilray, said some of the potential for Hwy 99W may have been missed in the analysis. He noted that it is important to determine how much 99W means to Tigard. He wanted to address how the highway affects future growth and development as well as the character development in the community. He said it is important to take steps to integrate Hwy 99W into commuter rail and bus travel. He said that bus travel along Hwy 99W needs to tie in to the commuter rail and that Hwy 99W needs to be closely coordinated with what the Downtown wants. He said that it is important to pay attention to the update of the Regional Transportation Plan. Development and growth along Hwy 99W should be evaluated whether or not it benefits Tigard. He said that Hwy 99W could become part of a larger web of alternative travel alternatives. For example; he noted that perhaps long term visions could include street-car connections to major bus routes as well as connections to commuter rail. He feels that alternative modes of travel, especially bike and pedestrian travel still should be considered along the highway as a valid objective, both for all three short- medium- and long-term periods. Bike travel and pedestrian usage should not be discounted on the highway just because it would be hard to accommodate now.

CAC members raised the issue about whom the project should accommodate. For example, should it accommodate the 50% of the people who are driving through Tigard right now, or should it address the local community's needs. It was emphasized in discussion that a balance needs to happen. It was agreed among the CAC members that the project should not just enhance through-traffic but should also emphasize enhancing the quality of life in Tigard. There was discussion that many people accept congestion but want the quality of their trip and the opportunities along their trip length to be better. For example, Hwy 99W now is not a very pleasant place to be – either in the automobile, on bike, as a pedestrian, or on transit. It was emphasized that the region needs to look at reducing traffic on Hwy 99W through the balancing of traffic on other routes. It was noted that Hwy 99W has one of the highest volumes of traffic in the region. Mr. Morris said he would like to implement the “low hanging fruit” idea. He talked about improving driveway access, eliminating turning movements and doing temporary things like providing Jersey barriers to buffer the pedestrian from traffic until major improvements could be made down the road. Jesse Black said the purpose of the study should also be to recognize the economic and business impacts that any improvements to 99W would have. He noted that the study should not put any businesses out of business. He said it is important for improvements to recognize quality of life issues for Tigard residents.

The CAC also stressed the importance of getting more interest by TriMet. Particularly important is to link the alternative mode travel and buses to commuter rail. Councilor Buehner said Hwy 99W needs to be improved to help local businesses and residents. She said the project's efforts should be geared towards helping the customer to get from point A to point B on the highway without having to get on the highway. She noted that shared access, shared driveway connections with parking lots, and the like, are very valid ideas and could take the very short trip traffic off of the highway.

Dan Barnes stressed that it is important to accommodate the 53% of people who do move along the highway, because they have every right to utilize the highway. They use it as a way to get back and forth to work, and to home. Interim measures are needed to improve access to businesses, such as driveway management and pedestrian and bike access. These need to be improved for safety purposes. He noted that buses already exist on the highway and that it would be a long time before light rail would occur. He said that transit could be improved by increasing the safety, comfort, and aesthetics of bus stops.

Roger Potthoff said that the future Hwy 99W may be linked to what happens in the Tigard Triangle. He used as an example a proposed WalMart Store in the Tigard Triangle that he feels would really overload traffic on the Highway. He noted that WalMart and other "big box" retailers are blocked from locating in some areas because of traffic issues. The local roadways could not accommodate the number of customers that are attracted to these businesses. However, if the Highway's capacity is improved, it could be immediately used up by certain kinds of new businesses. He said that this is a policy/land use issue the City needs to address.

Mr. Potthoff said that a "Boulevard" concept should be implemented on the highway. He noticed that boulevards are wide facilities that have trees and islands and good aesthetics. He said that aesthetics, including quality landscaping could bring a safer and calmer feeling to the highway. He said that the vision for implementing short- mid- and long-range terms on Hwy 99W is to bring the facility back from the brink of becoming the worst of "82<sup>nd</sup> Ave".

The CAC noted that driveway consolidation should be done concurrently with efforts to get traffic from one business to another such as connected parking lots. It is very important to keep the very short trip off of Hwy 99W to eliminate unnecessary turning movements.

Mr. Black said that driveway closures need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and that this topic needs to be handled very sensitively.

The CAC emphasized that the Downtown Tigard Plan must be honored by the Hwy 99W Study. Also the relationship between land use, aesthetics, transit, and the connection of transit facilities to one another via all modes of travel is very important.

It was noted that the City needs to be engaged in addressing the through traffic issue with other jurisdictions and agencies. It was acknowledged that through traffic needs to be accommodated but an effort is needed to provide these trips less congested alternative routes

It was noted by the Mr. Morris that buses are not used much on Hwy 99W, or in Tigard, because everybody can conveniently use a car. Buses really do not connect to any place except on businesses on Hwy 99W and to other points throughout the region. It was noted that it is still more convenient to drive a car.

There was discussion about intersection enhancements. From a practical standpoint, intersection improvements for auto, bike, and pedestrian may be the best way to improve operations and capacity.

Councilor Buehner emphasized that Hwy 99W needs to be given more priority in the region and state. She noted that Hwy 26 has received a lot of attention by ODOT in the last several years. She said it is time that Hwy 99W received similar attention and funding. She said that it is important to increase the visibility and importance of the highway and its importance to both Tigard and the region. She said this needs to be brought to the attention of political leadership in the region as well as in Salem.

The meeting was then adjourned at approximately 9:00pm.

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